

THE PORTAGE SENTINEL

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THE PORTAGE SENTINEL

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THE SEVEN BEANS.

OR THE
True Story of Lefgoim.

The East is the land of stories. The Arab around the evening watch-fire in the desert, the Persian merchant in the caravanserai, the idle Turk in the coffee-shop, lying puffing in his chibouk, on the sultan jaded with sensuality, lounging on luxuriant cushions in the recesses of his palace, and the Georgian beauty, weary of slavery, and dreaming of her native hills—all value a good tale as the greatest of treats, and a good story-teller as the cleverest of men. When the business of the day is at an end, the shopkeepers and merchants of the town hurry to the cafe, and there reclining easily with the bowls of their pipes at their feet, and all their senses buried in voluptuous dreaminess, they listen while the professional story-teller recounts the adventures of some follower of the Prophet, and his reward is never grudgingly bestowed. When his talent and dexterity are very great, the payments made him are sometimes extravagant. The intervals between the stories are filled up by the performances of the dimes, or dancing girls. The stories are always acted as well as related, and sometimes with great dramatic power. The following tale as related in the coffee shops of Cairo, has fallen under our hand, from the pen of Charles Asselineau, and we have put it into shape and form.

In the name of the Prophet, welcome! From the beginning of the world unto the end a cloud never descends for a parcel. In Cairo there are three good things—the Mezzal, the Nile, and the Feast of the Sultan. At Damascus there are two bad things—blasphemy and falsehood. Allah is Allah. In Cairo there lived not many years ago a poor man and his wife, and his name was Ben Lefgoim. He was an industrious man, but times were hard, money scarce, and with great difficulty he made a living. He would sit in his hut, hunched over his loom, crying, "God is God, and Mohammed is his prophet, but what has Mohammed done for me! His wife would reproach him with his wickedness; but in vain—He continued to find fault with the decrees of Providence.

One morning Ben Lefgoim rose early and prepared to go to work. His wife asked him where he was going, but he would not say. She pressed, however, very hard, and as the cunning of woman is very great, he at last laid bare his heart before her. He had made up his mind to go out, and rob the first man that came by.

"Dog of an Arab!" cried she, angrily, "so you would turn thief, would you? Take a book, and an inkstand, and a pen; go out into the bazaar, and set you down gravely in a corner, but where, looking humble, you may be seen by all. The people will think you a learned Sheikh; they will ask your advice, and you will become a rich man!"

"But," replied the husband, dolefully, "I have not even a turban to cover my head." His wife looked round, and saw lying in a corner an empty water-pot, a kind of pumpkin, which she cut in two, and stuck on his head. This gave him a very ancient and solemn aspect. A wagging neighbor even called him as he went out Sheikh Yateney, which being translated is Father Pumpkin. Lefgoim, however, looked not to the right or the left, but his book open, and inkstand at hand, moved on towards the bazaar. He looked about him, and at last saw a spot which lay near the entrance, and there fixed himself. Now happened that about an hour later a peasant from one of the neighboring villages came by, looking round him anxiously, and prying into every doorway. He was about to rush through the bazaar, when, seeing the solemn-looking Sheikh seated on the ground, he said:

"May thy beard never be less than master, I have lost my donkey. You are a learned man, can you tell me where it is?"

"Oh, Fatima!" muttered Lefgoim to himself, "you may expect a beating for this. Never was a man placed in such a wretched position by his wife. But he felt he must answer, so he said at random: 'Go to the cemetery, and you will find your donkey.'"

Now it happened that the peasant found his donkey in the place indicated, and returning told the Sheikh, gave him many thanks and a piece of money. Sheikh Yateney, as he was in future called, went home in the evening quite delighted, and thanked his wife for her good counsel. Next day he returned full of doubt and hesitation to his post, and was consulted as soon as seated about the loss of some silk. Fortune was good to him again. He gave advice, and it chanced that again it was good. And so it went on many days, and it always happened that what he said was right. Providence seemed to take a pleasure in carrying out his predictions, and he humbled himself before Allah, and declared daily that Mohammed was really his prophet.

But bad are the calculations of man. Before a month was over, Yateney would willingly have never been born, and thought himself the most miserable man in existence. He was seated one morning in the bazaar as usual, looking out complacently for clients, his clothing no longer ragged, but still wearing his pumpkin, which, was so to speak, his sign, when four grim janissaries came up, seized him somewhat roughly, and took him before the pasha of the province.

"Yateney," said the pasha to him, "I have heard of thy reputation for wisdom. Now, last night a band of robbers, entered my palace and stripped my treasure. Thou must recover it for me, and in seven days. If thou dost not, thou shalt lose thy head."

Yateney bowed his head and went out lamenting. When he reached home he threw his pumpkin on the floor, seated himself beside it, and heaped ashes on his bare skull. "I am a ruined man! a lost man! Why was I born! Mohammed is not the prophet of God. I will sustain this before all the Ulemas in the world."

"What is the matter?" asked his wife, gently. "Out of my sight, culture! ghoul!" exclaimed Lefgoim, furiously, at the same time beating her. "It is your fault that I am about to die. You wish to marry again, do you?"

"But, my dear husband," cried Fatima, when his first moment of rage passed. "explain to me what is the matter." "The matter, unhappy wretch! In seven days I shall have my head cut off."

Then he got up and took out of a sack seven beans, one for each day that he had to live; and towards evening, after having bemoaned his hard fate all day, swallowed one, crying out as he did so: "There goes one."

Now it happened that at this moment there was passing in the street one of the band of robbers who had pillaged the pasha's treasury. He knew the reputation of the Sheikh; and as he said these words in a loud tone, "There goes one," he thought he recognized, and ran away to tell his associates, who at the news were much alarmed. They held council what to do, but came to no decision. However it was determined that the next evening another of the robbers should go within sight of Sheikh Yateney's house, and judge for himself. He did so just about dark. At his window sat the unfortunate man; and as the robber passed he swallowed another bean, and exclaimed: "There goes a second." Terrified, conscience-stricken, the thief fled, and repeated what he had heard to his companions. They decided that another should try the third day, and so on until the whole party had tried the experiment. As, however, precisely the same thing occurred during six days, the robbers became so greatly alarmed, that they came in a body to the Sheikh, implored mercy, and gave up to him the whole of the treasure.

Yateney gravely observed that he knew all along that they were the guilty persons, but that before denouncing them he had resolved to try what denunciation would do. Thereupon they swore by the Prophet and the beads of their fathers that they would rob no more; and on this solemn assurance Sheikh Yateney allowed them to depart. The next day he went before the pasha, told him he had recovered his treasure, and desired him to send his janissaries for it. The Pasha did so, and then gave him a handsome reward. Yateney delighted, went home, and told his wife all, thanked God he had a partner so full of wit as to put such an idea in his head. But he determined to go to the bazaar no more, content to live on the pasha's liberality.

But the destiny of Ben Lefgoim was not fulfilled. His desire for rest could be no more satisfied than that of the dove which went forth from the ark and found nothing but water. There happened at Stamboul (Constantinople) a very grave affair. A treasure placed in the Sultan's seraglio was most inexplicably robbed; and the riches being principally diamonds and precious stones, the grief of the monarch was great. The event was rumored about through all Islam, and the Pasha of Damascus, hearing of the circumstances, sent word to the Sultan that there was a man in Cairo who could discover the authors of the robbery.

The Sultan immediately sent orders that Yateney should be sent under good escort to Stamboul. Yateney was furious when he heard that he had to go to Constantinople, and for what purpose. He was like a madman, and could express his outrageous feelings in no other way than by beating his wife, which he did more severely than the first time. Then, as it was impossible to resist an order of the Sultan, he set out for Stamboul, taking with him his wife, and an escort of four janissaries.

As he went along Yateney declared continually that it was all over with him, that he was a ruined man. Arrived in sight of Stamboul his grief grew greater still, and when he landed his heart quite failed him. He accordingly bade the janissaries go forward, and say that he had arrived, but could only reach the palace next day. His object was to gain one day more of life. He then erected his tent on the shore, and remained along with his wife.

The reputation of the Sheikh had spread through all Stamboul, and his arrival had alarmed all the robbers in the place. They trembled lest they should all be discovered. But the real robbers of the seraglio were chiefly frightened. They had been on the eve of embarking with their prize, when they were suddenly prevented. To wait a better opportunity, they had buried their treasure on the sandy shore; on the very spot Yateney had pitched his tent.

This put an end to all hesitation on the part of the thieves. They rushed to Yateney threw themselves at his feet, begged his forgiveness, and implored him not to denounce them to the police. Yateney made a similar reply to that he had made to the seven thieves of Cairo, and retired to rest contented and happy. Next day, when the messengers of the Sultan came, he exclaimed:

"It is not my place to go to the Sultan, but his to come to me. The treasure is here!" The Sultan came with all his court. The earth was dug up, and the treasure discovered. But when the vizier asked Yateney who were the authors of the robbery, he answered:

"What matter! here is the treasure, the rest is in the hands of God!"

The vizier did not insist, and the Sultan, ravished at recovering his treasure, loaded Yateney with caresses and presents. He not only rewarded him, but insisted on keeping him about his person. He treated him with distinguished honor as a man of mark and note, loaded him with riches and put him on an equality with himself. But Yateney was not happy. He did not feel himself equal to his position, and, pestered with

questions from all around, sighed for his home and obscurity.

One day he was in a bath with the Sultan. "If," said he, "I were to give the Sultan a box on the ear, he would think me mad, and send me back to my own country."

No sooner said than done. Yateney gave the Sultan a box on the ear and rushed out of the room. The Sultan followed him, burning with rage; scarcely had he crossed the threshold when down went the whole building.

The Sultan, persuaded that the Sheikh had acted with great presence of mind to save his life, protested that he would grant him any favor he chose to ask of him.

"Father of True Believers," said the Sheikh, "I only ask one thing, and that is that you publish through all your dominions strict orders that no one shall ask me any more questions."

Thereupon he told the Sultan his whole history, at which the Sultan was amazed, and all the more looked upon the Sheikh as an inspired man. Then he embraced him, made him great presents, and sent him home to his own country, where ever after he regarded his wife as the author of his fortune, and advised all young men to take example by him, and set great store by matrimonial counsels.

American Character.

An English writer, Mr. CASEY, in his work "Two Years on the Farm of Uncle Sam," just published in London, gives the following analysis of American character:

"Viewing the Parisians in dress—the English in energy—cautious as a Dutchman—impulsive as an Irishman—patriotic as Tell—brave as Wallace—cool as Wellington—and as royal as Alexander—there he goes—the American citizen!"

In answering your questions, or speaking commonly, his style is that of the ancient Spartan; but put him on a stump, with audience of Whigs, Democrats, and Barnburners, and he becomes a compound of Tom Cribb and Demosthenes—a fountain of eloquence, passion, sentiment, sarcasm, logic and drollery, altogether different from anything known or imagined in the Old World states. Say anything (public men) united with conventional phraseology, he swings his rhetorical mace, with a vigorous arm, pushing the antagonistic principle or person into a most villainous compound. See him at dinner—he dispatches his meal with a speed which leads you to suppose him not a ruminating animal; yet enjoying his cigar for an hour afterwards, with the gusto and earnest of a Spaniard.

"Walking right on, as if it were life against time, with glass at fever heat; yet taking it cool in the most serious and pressing manner—a compound of the Red Man, Brummell and Franklin, statesman and laborer—on he goes, divided and sub-divided in politics and religion—professionally opposed with a keenness of competition in vain looked for in England. Yet let but the national rights of liberty be threatened, and that vast nature stands a pyramid of resolve, united as with one man and heart, head, hand and purse, burning with Roman zeal to defend inviolate the cause of the commonwealth.

"To him who has lived among the Americans and looked largely at the theory and practice of their government and its executive, there remains no possible doubt that the greatest amount of personal security and freedom has been produced from the history of all empires, it stands the nearest of all earthly systems to perfection; because it is built on and embodies those principles which God hath proclaimed its attributes.

"I noticed that the American sets less value on life than Europeans; that is, he does not think the loss of life the greatest loss—the ultimatum. When a man dies you see none of that sentiment. (I use the best term I can think of), which surrounds such an event in other countries. The American is silent in manner—embarrassingly so at first, extremely accurate in his observation of human nature, and any man that cannot bear to be scrutinized had better not come here. The American judges much by the eye, and has a most enviable power of estimation. Your temperament, speech, looks and acts, are all taken in by him; and if you can get a tablet of his judgment, you will find a remarkable daguerotype of your exact worth written thereon. They are all phrenologists and physiognomists, not merely as philosophers, but as practical applicators of those inductive sciences; and beneath a show of positive laziness or languor there is an amount of energy and action, mental and physical, perfectly surprising. They are not averse to the higher branches of science or literature; but they bend all to utility, and are, as a nation, the best arithmeticians in the world; and this science alone gives a terse matter-of-fact to their mental working; in fact, when a man wants to reflect on a proposition, he says, 'Wait till I figure it up.'"

STRONGER THAN AN ARMY WITH BANNERS.—A number of small-pox patients in Oglethorpe, Georgia, made a stampede from the buildings in which they were confined by the civil authorities, and in different stages of the fearful malady, fell upon the officers and put them all to flight. May or Sorrell called out the military to suppress the disturbance, they, however, made but poor resistance to their diseased opponents, flying in great confusion at their approach. At last accounts, small-pox had the day, and the disorder was subsiding.—Pittsburgh Post.

CURE FOR THE BLUES.—Luther says, "When I am assailed with heavy tribulations, I rush out among my pigs rather than remain alone by myself. The human heart is like a millstone in a mill; when you put wheat under it, it turns and grinds and bruises the wheat to flour; if you put no wheat in, it still grinds on, but then it is itself it grinds and wears away."

"Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them," said Salim as she kissed her lover.

Shakespeare Improved.

The scene is in Buffalo—the greenroom of the theatre. Time—afternoon. On that eventful night Charlotte Cushman was to astonish the Buffaloes by her terrible acting as Mrs. Macbeth. But the Mr. Macbeth, in attempting to get properly drunk for the part, overstepped the boundary, became stupidly intoxicated, and woke up with a fit of the strongest kind of "delirious triangles." The manager tore his hair and swore at the prompter; the prompter kicked the call-boy; and that juvenile retorted by getting up an amateur combat with a youth who brought somebody's dresses to the theatre.

The day wore on. What shall we do for a Macbeth? Finally a youth of the faithfully dramatic family of Adams volunteered. He played Yankee brave chiefly, and as he said, never read the "old cuss" (meaning Macbeth) more than two or three times in his life; he was however known to have a strong memory, and it was resolved to let him do the best he could with it. He got along very decently till the banquet scene, which, as the play is now acted, commences the third act. When the ghost of Banquo walked in, pointing to the bloody wound in his throat, our friend was taken aback. His speech should have been:

"Aunt and quit my sight! Let the earth hide thee;
Thy bones are marrowless—thy blood is cold;
Thou hast no speculation in those eyes,
Which thou dost so glare with."

Instead of our hero burst out with—"You git out! Go, hide yourself—yer ain't got no maw in yer bones—no warm in yer blood—yer ain't got no speckleration in yer eyes. You get out!"

After the roar of laughter (in which Banquo's ghost heartily joined) had subsided in part, Miss Cushman advanced to the front, looking as sour as pickled Alpine crab, and said, in the words of the text:

"Think of this, good peers,
But as a piece of custom: 'tis no other,
Only I speak the pleasure of the time!"

The retort was so apt that the "enous" was now on the Yankee. He went through with the piece after a fashion, but never undertook "serious business" again.

Cool Impudence.

There is a gentleman residing in Western New York, whom, in default of his real name we will call Colonel. He has one son, Ned, rather a graceless youth, full of all the wild pranks in which students generally excel. Being at home during vacation, he corresponded regularly with his chum, who, by agreement, was to keep him "posted up" in regard to everything that transpired with him worthy of note. Of course he was very careful to keep all his precious epistles from the eye of the Colonel, and as Ned was "Colonel Jr.," it became necessary to watch the mail arrivals closely, as his chum wasn't very particular in adding that distinguishing feature to his name.

One day he rode around to the Post Office, as usual, and found to his dismay that Joe, the groom, had taken the letter and left for home. He started at a gallop, but was unable to make up the time for Joe arrived ahead. Hoping that nothing very bad would come of it, he marched in to dinner as cavalierly as possible. One glance at the Colonel's face revealed to him that he was in for it.

The substantial being disposed of, as usual, the lady mother left the room, and left Ned and the Colonel sipping their wine. Leisurely pulling the letter from his pocket, the Colonel passed it to Ned, and asked him what he thought of it. Ned quietly perused it, its contents being an account of his chum's doings, both lawful and unlawful, and ending by urging him to come to him without delay. Ned finished it in silence, and handing it back to his father, said:

"Well, sir, considering your age and station in life, I think you keep very bad company!" and before the Colonel could recover himself sufficiently to reply, he vanished from the apartment.—Dutchman.

"Breathe not a sentiment, say not a word, give not an expression of countenance, that will offend another or send a thrill of pain through his bosom. We are surrounded by sensitive hearts, which a word, a look even may fill to the brim with sorrow. If you are careless of the opinions and expressions of others, remember that they are differently constituted from yourself, and never by a word or sign cast a shadow on a happy heart, or throw away the smiles of joy that love to linger on a pleasant, cheerful countenance."

LAUGHTER.—A hearty laugh occasionally is an act of wisdom. It shakes the cobwebs out of a man's brains, and the hydropneumonia from his ribs far more effectively than either champagne or blue pill. One of the Emperors of Japan is said to have killed himself by immoderately laughing, on being told that the Americans were governed without a king.

A HUNTER OF KENTUCKY.—The correspondent of the Evansville Journal writes as follows about a Kentucky hunter:

"Wat Eckman—it would do you good to see him—has followed hunting for a livelihood since the year 1831. Since that period he says he has killed 38 bears, 944 wolves, 3847 coons, 990 foxes, 961 wild geese, 3040 pheasants, 44 ground hogs, 80 wild cats, 14 pole-cats, 206 minks, besides squirrel, quail, and other small game beyond his power to calculate. The sum he has realized from his game, skins, &c., falls but little short of twelve thousand dollars."

Unprofitable discourse robbeth us of much time. Some simply employ their tongues in telling fabulous and filthy stories; others in discoursing of parties and opinions, and in talking of the faults and misdeeds of other men, some about the times, and inquiring after news. But let Christians, when they converse imitate their Lord; the words that proceeded out of his mouth were wise words.

LAW OF OHIO.

PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY.

[No. 15.] AN ACT

Defining the mode of laying out and establishing State roads.

Sec. 1. Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Ohio, That all State roads to be hereafter laid out, shall be laid out by the county commissioners of the county in which they are to be laid out, and the board of county commissioners of each county shall appoint one or more disinterested freeholders of their respective counties as commissioners to view and survey said roads.

Sec. 2. That all petitions for any State road shall specify the places of beginning, the intermediate points, the place of termination of said road.

Sec. 3. That on application for a petition, signed by at least twenty freeholders of each road through which it may be proposed to lay out and establish any State road, the board of county commissioners of each county shall appoint one or more disinterested freeholders of their respective counties as commissioners to view and survey said roads.

Sec. 4. That previous to granting an order on any petition presented as aforesaid, one of the parties in each county interested in the location of said road, shall enter into a bond with two or more responsible freeholders in said county, as securities to the satisfaction of the county commissioners, payable to the State of Ohio, to the effect, to wit: That the said parties shall be bound to meet at the place of laying out said road, on the first Wednesday of the month, then next ensuing, and the commissioners, when met as before directed, shall proceed to lay out and establish said road, and to the discharge of their duties respectively: Provided, that the said parties shall be bound to meet at the place of laying out said road, on the first Wednesday of the month, then next ensuing, and the commissioners, when met as before directed, shall proceed to lay out and establish said road, and to the discharge of their duties respectively: Provided, that the said parties shall be bound to meet at 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